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25 February 1966

COMMITTEE ON DOCUMENTATION

Foreign Publications Task Team (III)

Report to CODIB

This first report of Task Team III deals with the need for foreign publications within the Intelligence Community and the procurement of such publications.

NEED FOR FOREIGN PUBLICATIONS

The Team first set out to determine the extent of need for foreign publications in intelligence work by querying extensively production offices as well as collectors and reference people. Their replies make clear that the primary usage of foreign publications is for intelligence production purposes. The economists are very strong on this point. They say "Foreign publications are a primary source for production of economic intelligence. Their importance varies with subject and geographic region, but generally they provide from 50 to 90 per cent of ERA source material. Specifically they provide about 80 percent of source material on the USSR and 90 per cent on Eastern Europe." Similarly the military when they note "DIA considers foreign publications to be a vital source of intelligence and, in many subject areas, exploitation of this source is an absolute necessity to the successful production of responsive intelligence."

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The geographic people show an extensive need in their reply "Foreign publications are used extensively in all geographic intelligence research and production. For certain types of USSR studies they represent the best and sometimes the only source of data. Even where least used, in non-Bloc European studies, foreign publications provide [REDACTED]"

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Similarly the S&T community notes "Foreign scientific and technical publications and news articles are used extensively as sources for intelligence production. The information derived from these sources enhances the value and facilitates the interpretation of information obtained by other means. In the case of OSI components engaged in research on basic foreign research and development, foreign scientific and technical publications comprise [REDACTED] background material." For current intelligence purposes we find a varied usefulness ranging from "absolutely essential-widely used" on the USSR to "little used" on W. Europe. The whole range is summed up neatly by the Chairman of the Board of National Estimates when he writes "The pattern of foreign publications usefulness is varied. Except for certain exotic items in military and other fields, foreign publications (and broadcasts) are pretty much the bread and butter of our Soviet, East European, and Chinese Communist analysis efforts -- and in the case of foreign policy matters, almost our sole source. We also value Western European publications for their

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information and analysis of developments in Europe, the USSR, Africa, and the Near East. Except in a few cases, we do not get much nourishment from foreign publications from Africa, Latin America, or non-Communist Asia."

In addition to the solid need for foreign publications in intelligence production, we find many other uses. For example, the photographs contained in foreign publications are used "to supplement and complement aerial photography." Many publications are used for background information and research. Other uses are in clandestine operations where publications in some areas "are particularly important for identifying targets for operations, for evaluating the effectiveness of our operations, and for the planning of new approaches to our targets." Still other uses include leads generating collection requirements, support to mapping and charting projects and proper identification of targets for aerial photography purposes.

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